

## **ABSTRACT**

A spinal stabilization system comprises an elongated stabilization device including a curved configuration along a longitudinal axis thereof. The elongated stabilization device includes a length and cross-section sized for positioning through a pathway formed from an opening in a lateral mass of a first vertebra and into the first vertebra, through the facet joint formed by adjacent articular surfaces of the first vertebra and an adjacent bony structure, and into the adjacent bony structure. Instruments can be provided to form the pathway and insert the stabilization device into the pathway.